

# What We Heard Report - Route 722 and Blackmud Creek

City of Edmonton  
Edmonton Transit Service  
[engaged.edmonton.ca/Route722](https://engaged.edmonton.ca/Route722)

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**Edmonton**

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## Public Engagement Summary

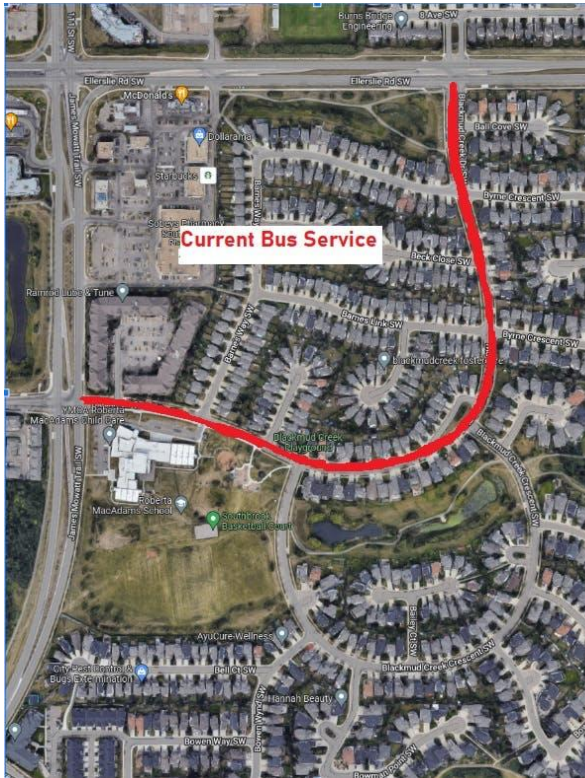
### Project Overview

Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) is committed to monitoring, listening and adjusting service based on public feedback and ridership demand to meet riders' needs and provide safe, reliable and convenient access within the city. Public feedback, [Edmonton's Transit Strategy](#), as well as technical and financial considerations have shaped the current approach to transit network design. Citizens' expectations vary by where they live, the length and type of their travel, as well as their current primary transportation mode.

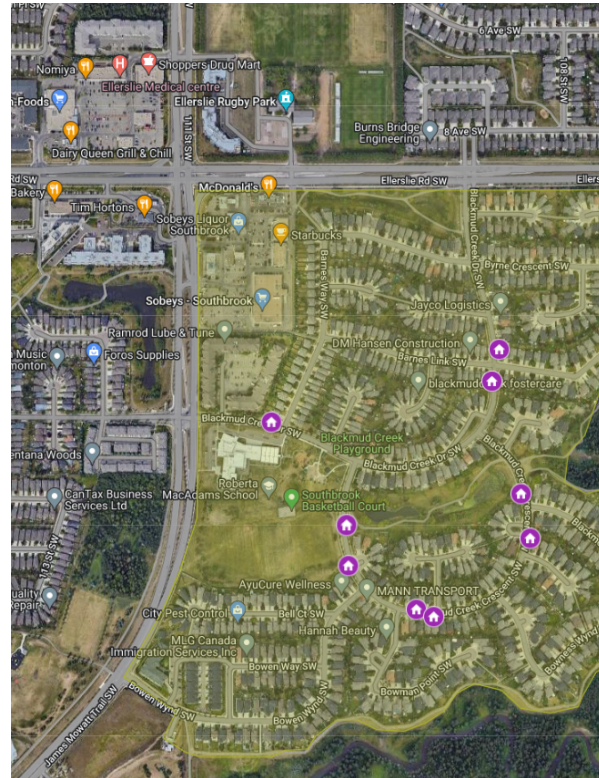
After the Bus Network Redesign (BNR) launch in 2021, the City continued public conversation to gather riders' feedback to further improve transit service for people directly affected by BNR. As a result, adjustments were made to routes, schedules, service frequency and timing points.

After the BNR implementation, ETS heard concerns from Blackmud Creek residents about Route 722 in their neighbourhood. Concerns included:

- Lack of bus service on Blackmud Creek Crescent;
- High volume of bus traffic on Route 722 along Blackmud Creek Drive;
- Perception of buses speeding; and
- Concerns with bus noise.



*Current bus service offered in the Blackmud Creek neighbourhood*



*Potential changes for On Demand Transit in Blackmud Creek neighbourhood*

## Proposed Changes

On Demand Transit service (ODT), launched in April 2021, as part of the Bus Network Redesign. ODT buses provide service for select neighbourhoods, seniors' residences and attractions across Edmonton. Passengers can book a ride ahead of time via a smartphone app, online or a call centre.

In response to concerns shared by Blackmud Creek residents, ETS initiated a public engagement process about the potential of replacing the high-frequency bus service on Route 722 with On Demand Transit service for Blackmud Creek with the following outcomes:

- Provide ODT service through Blackmud Creek and restore service along Blackmud Creek Crescent to reduce walking distance within the neighbourhood.
- Reduce transit service and bus volumes and noise by moving Route 722 to James Mowatt Trail.
- Reduce travel time and costs of Route 722, providing a more direct journey for riders south of Blackmud Creek.

The City invited Blackmud Creek residents and Route 722 riders to share their perspectives on the proposed changes during the public engagement period from October 4 to 24, 2022.

### Public Engagement Approach

The City's public engagement spectrum defines the public's level of influence in engagement processes. **The role of the public during this engagement was at the ADVISE level on the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum** and the public were invited to share their feedback and perspectives.

Visit [edmonton.ca/publicengagement](https://edmonton.ca/publicengagement) for more information on the City's public engagement process.



Online engagement opportunities were provided to broaden outreach and ensure a diversity of voices in the engagement process. Residents and riders were encouraged to complete an online survey and participate in an online public meeting to provide their feedback and ideas about transit service in the community.

Blackmud Creek residents and Route 722 riders were communicated with through mailouts, strategically placed road signs and bus stop posters within the targeted area.

### How We Engaged

Blackmud Creek residents and Route 722 riders were invited to share perspectives about Route 722.

The engagement period was open from October 4 to 24, 2022. A number of engagement activities were available to residents and riders including:

**Online survey****Question & Answer tool****Online meeting**

(On the Engaged Edmonton web page)

The key insights we received from each activity are summarized below.

|                                                                                     |                                                       |                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|    | <b>192</b><br>Completed surveys                       |                                   |
|   | <b>552</b><br>Visits to the Engaged Edmonton web page | <b>3</b><br>Questions submitted   |
|  | <b>12</b><br>Online meeting registrations             | <b>October 23, 2022</b><br>5-6 PM |

## Online Survey

The online survey was a tool used to obtain feedback about satisfaction with the current Route 722 in Blackmud Creek and to understand travel patterns for the possibility of adding On Demand Transit service in the community.

## Who Was Engaged

| Place of residence and transit usage    | # of respondents<br>(Total N=192) |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Blackmud Creek residents                | 133*                              |
| Route 722 riders outside Blackmud Creek | 37                                |
| None of the above/Other                 | 22                                |

\*102 Blackmud Creek residents who completed the survey were Route 722 riders.

## What We Asked

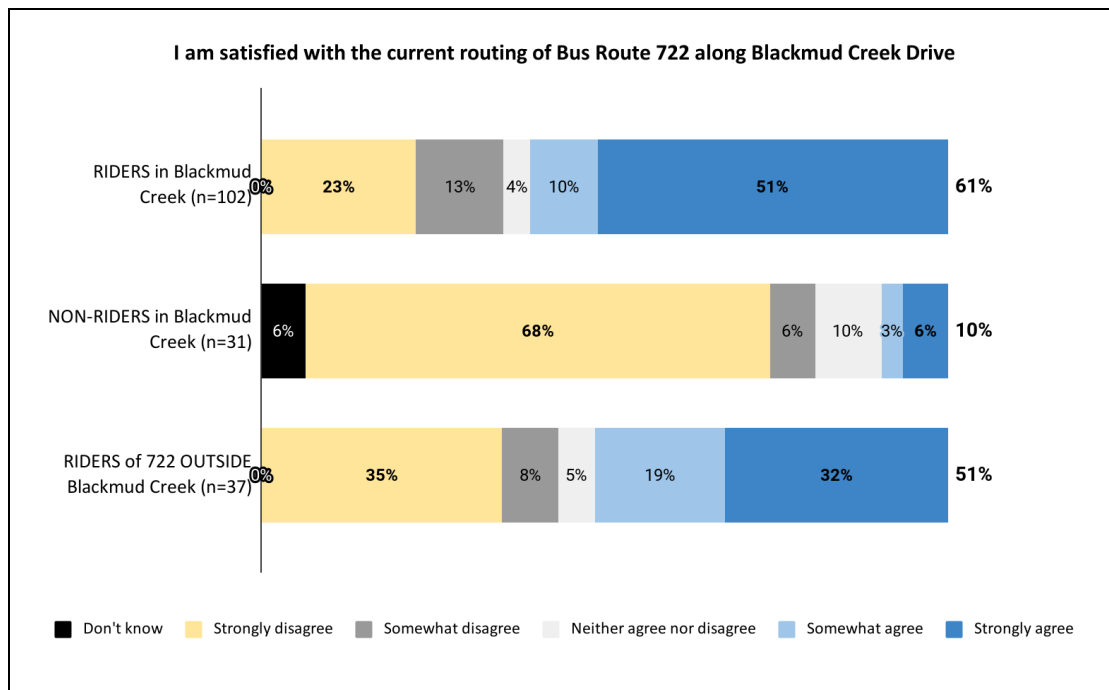
The survey aimed to understand the perceptions of Route 722 in Blackmud Creek, including satisfaction with the current route, concerns about noise and speed, and bus traffic in the neighbourhood. The survey also asked questions to determine anticipated travel patterns for future use of transit service.

## What We Heard

### Satisfaction with the current Route 722

Survey respondents expressed mixed opinions about satisfaction with Route 722 routing along Blackmud Creek Drive:

- 49% of all Blackmud Creek respondents and 61% of riders in Blackmud Creek somewhat or strongly agreed they are satisfied with the current routing in Blackmud Creek Drive. However, 10% of non-riders in Blackmud Creek are satisfied with the current route.
- Satisfaction was also split among riders of Route 722 who reside outside Blackmud Creek (51% satisfied).



### Coverage in Blackmud Creek

Blackmud Creek residents expressed mixed opinions about transit coverage and the walking distance of bus stops within the neighbourhood:

- 40% of Route 722 riders and 68% of non-riders in Blackmud Creek would prefer better coverage through Blackmud Creek and Blackmud Creek Crescent, even if it resulted in less frequent service.
- 70% of Route 722 riders in Blackmud Creek agree they can easily get to and from the nearest bus stop to their home. However, the agreement is low (26%) among non-riders in Blackmud Creek.

### Concerns with Route 722

The majority of Blackmud Creek residents disagreed with concerns about speeding and noise with the current routing of Route 722 in Blackmud Creek:

- 60% disagree that the Route 722 buses cause a lot of noise.
- 57% disagree that they often speed.

Non-riders in Blackmud Creek were more likely to agree with speeding and noise concerns.

Please see the results in the table below:

| % Disagreement (somewhat/strongly)                                   |                                  |                               |                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Concerns                                                             | Blackmud Creek residents (n=133) | Blackmud Creek RIDERS (n=102) | Blackmud Creek NON-RIDERS (n=31) |
| There are too many large buses travelling along Blackmud Creek Drive | 60%                              | 73%                           | 19%                              |
| The buses travelling along Blackmud Creek Drive cause a lot of noise | 60%                              | 72%                           | 23%                              |
| The buses travelling along Blackmud Creek Drive often speed          | 57%                              | 69%                           | 19%                              |

### Potential On Demand Transit Service

24% of riders in Blackmud Creek indicated they or someone else in their household are likely to use On Demand Transit service if it replaced Bus Route 722 in Blackmud Creek, while 64% indicated they would be unlikely to use On Demand Transit service.

Survey respondents expressed some concerns about On Demand Transit service and the overall proposed changes. Please see the examples below.

- Concerns with the same-day booking of On Demand Transit service rides for routine schedules and repeating trips.

***"There are some accessibility issues due to the requirements of smartphones to check for updates and arriving times."** - survey respondent*

- Lack of clarity on how the proposed changes may impact people's travel needs.

***"Need to start again at the nearest bus stop for the convenience of our 12-13 years old kids. Especially in winter - it's hard to walk so much."** - survey respondent*

***"The reduction of bus stops in the area forces people to walk further to reach their bus stops. Winter conditions will make access difficult."** - survey respondent*

- Lack of clarity among participants for the reasons of the proposed change and its budget impacts.

*“Preference to keep the route 722 but restoring service through Blackmud Creek Crescent if traffic and noise are the main reasons behind the current proposal.” - survey respondent*

- Supporting On Demand Transit Service for better coverage and service

*“The walk to these bus stops is currently way too long from Blackmud Creek South and the buses often run late. An On-Demand bus with real-time tracking would make all the difference - especially in winter months. Outside of peak hours, Blackmud Creek doesn’t need large buses running all day.” - survey respondent*

## Engaged Edmonton

The Engaged Edmonton web page included a Question & Answer tool to encourage public interaction and to connect the public directly with the project team. Also, the Engaged Edmonton web page was used to promote other engagement opportunities offered to the public during the engagement period.

### Visits to Engaged Edmonton

There were 552 visits to the Engaged Edmonton web page.

### What We Asked

Participants were encouraged to ask questions and share their concerns. People shared their preferences, suggested changes and improvements.

### What We Heard

The key perspectives shared by respondents and considered by the project team included:

- Restoring conventional transit service to Blackmud Creek Crescent, similar to the pre-BNR network.
- Buses in Blackmud Creek are always empty and there is too much service, so On Demand Transit service may be more reasonable for this area.
- Whether On Demand Transit service is suitable for students going to D.S. MacKenzie, which is the designated junior high school in Blackmud Creek.

## Online Public Meeting

The online public meeting was an opportunity for the public to share their experience, hear others and discuss their concerns with the project team.

Two online meetings were initially scheduled to provide an opportunity for the public to participate in a facilitated conversation. Due to low registration, only one meeting was held on October 23, 2022. A total of 12 people registered and nine people attended the online session.

## Who Was Engaged

The meeting was conducted online via Google Meet. Registration was open to anyone, and calendar invitations were sent prior to the meeting. Participants were a mix of residents who live in the Blackmud Creek neighbourhood and Route 722 riders.

## What We Asked

Through facilitated discussions, participants were asked to share their experiences with transit service, particularly Route 722, and share suggestions for improvements.

## What We Heard

Participants shared a diversity of perspectives on transit service in Blackmud Creek and Route 722. Among those who attended the meeting were parents of teens using this bus route, people who mainly take the bus to go to work, Blackmud Creek neighbourhood residents and bus riders living outside Blackmud Creek. Overall, the key themes shared included:

- Concerns with the same-day booking of On Demand Transit service rides for routine schedules and repeating trips.

***"For school children, the fact that they should book their trip every day is concerning. It's too much responsibility to ask an 11-year-old to remember to schedule for themselves each and every day."*** - meeting participant

***"It's an inconvenience having to remember every time I have to take the bus every morning, every afternoon to book it."*** - meeting participant

- Lack of knowledge about how the proposed On Demand Transit service may meet peoples' travel needs.

***"I don't want to be stuck at the same bus stop waiting 30 minutes for an on-demand bus that will come. The proposal concerns me, with the frequency of the service, that I have to wait after work when I'm rushing back commuting with several connecting routes."*** - meeting participant

***"The bus stop is right across from my home. However, I'm not sure on situations like this winter with very icy sidewalk and how should I walk far to reach to the new bus stop."*** - meeting participant

## GBA+ Spotlight

The City of Edmonton has adopted a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) process to consider more equitable access to programs and services. The survey was open to residents of the Blackmud Creek neighbourhood and Route 722 riders south of Blackmud Creek. Overall, 192 respondents completed the survey. The tables below show the diversity of survey respondents.

| <b>GBA+ Table of Blackmud Creek Residents/Route 722 Riders</b> | <b>n=192</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                                                  |              |
| Woman                                                          | 49%          |
| Man                                                            | 36%          |
| Non-binary/Trans/Two-Spirit/Other                              | 3%           |
| Prefer Not To Answer                                           | 14%          |
| <b>Children Under 18 in Household</b>                          |              |
| Yes                                                            | 52%          |
| No                                                             | 40%          |
| Prefer Not to Answer                                           | 8%           |
| <b>Identity</b>                                                |              |
| Racialized/visible minority                                    | 20%          |
| Persons with disabilities                                      | 8%           |
| Indigenous                                                     | 2%           |
| New to Canada                                                  | 2%           |
| LGBTQ2S+                                                       | 3%           |
| Other                                                          | 1%           |
| None of the above                                              | 44%          |
| Prefer Not to Answer                                           | 26%          |
| <b>Age</b>                                                     |              |
| Under 18                                                       | 9%           |
| 18-34                                                          | 24%          |
| 35-54                                                          | 45%          |
| 55+                                                            | 17%          |
| Prefer Not to Answer                                           | 5%           |
| <b>Income</b>                                                  |              |
| Under \$30,000                                                 | 8%           |

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| \$30,000 to \$59,999   | 11% |
| \$60,000 to \$99,999   | 11% |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 15% |
| \$150,000 and over     | 18% |
| Prefer Not to Answer   | 36% |

## Summary

We identified three stakeholder groups with the potential for different interests:

1. Residents of Blackmud Creek who don't use Route 722
2. Residents of Blackmud Creek who do use Route 722
3. Users of Route 722 who live south of Blackmud Creek

The majority of our survey responses came from Group 2 (Residents of Blackmud Creek who use Route 722), which would be most directly impacted by the proposed change.

The public engagement feedback results identified several points of agreement as well as differences among respondents:

- There is a need for better transit coverage in Blackmud Creek Crescent.
- Satisfaction with the current Route 722 routing in Blackmud Creek is mixed. Also, users of Route 722 are more likely to be satisfied with the current routing than non-users.
- If the City decides to extend On Demand Transit service to this community, additional communications efforts will be needed to educate the residents about how this service works.

## What Happens Next?

The City thanks Blackmud Creek residents and Route 722 riders for sharing their feedback. The public engagement results helped gather details about travel needs and perspectives on proposed route changes.

Any future changes to transit service in the community will be considered based on a number of factors including:

- Feedback provided by Blackmud Creek residents and Route 722 riders
- Ridership data
- Budget and resources available
- Transit Service Standards

For more information about this project and to stay updated on potential future changes, visit [engaged.edmonton.ca/route722](https://engaged.edmonton.ca/route722).